

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the claims of the present application are respectfully requested. In support, the Applicant respectfully submits the following arguments:

I. Objection to the Specification.

The abstract of the disclosure has been objected to because "Figure 2." As such, an amended abstract has been submitted.

II. Rejection of Claims 1-7 and 9-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

Claims 1-7 and 9-22 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious over European Patent No. 1,391,080 (hereinafter EP '080) in view of Anderson, United States Patent No. 5,167,903 (hereinafter USPN '903). Applicant has amended Claim 1 to clarify that the free upper edge is distinct from the fold line of the sheet-metal plate. Support for this amendment can be found in the Specification on page 5, lns. 21-29 and in Figures 6 and 10, for example. Claims 7 and 15-22 have been cancelled.

"To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness of a claimed invention all the claimed limitations must be taught or suggested by the prior art." *In re Wilson*, 424 F.2d 1382, 1385, 165 U.S.P.Q. 44, 496 (C.C.P.A. 1970); *see KSR Int'l. Co. v. Teleflex, Inc.*, 550 U.S. ____ (2007); *see also* MPEP 2142.

The Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of the Examiner, because EP '080 in combination with USPN '903 fails to disclose or suggest each and every limitation of Claim 1. Claim 1 of the present invention, as amended, relates to a slat comprising a trough which contains a plurality of juxtaposed inserts arranged parallel to one another. Page 2, lns. 6-7; pages

4-5, lns. 35-6 and 1, respectively. Each insert takes the form of a folded sheet-metal plate comprising two parts *connected along a folded line*: 1.) a *support strip arranged parallel to the direction of the incidence of the laser beam* and 2.) an *oblique strip which is inclined with respect to the direction of the incidence of the laser beam*. Page 2, lns. 8-14; page 5, lns. 25-6. The support strip has a free upper edge that forms a support element for the material to be cut, wherein the free upper edge is *distinct from* the fold line of the sheet-metal plate. Page 5, lns. 21-29 and Fig. 6.

EP '080 also does not disclose a support strip having a free upper edge that forms a support element for the product to be cut, where the *free upper edge is distinct from the fold line of the sheet-metal plate*. As acknowledged by the Examiner, the inserts described in EP '080 are not formed of a folded, thin sheet-metal plate. Further, according to the Examiner's interpretations of EP '080 each insert comprises a first part arranged parallel to the direction of incidence of the laser beam (defined by the left lateral face of each insert 2, shown in Fig. 2) and a second part inclined with respect to the direction of incidence of the laser beam (defined by the beveled right lateral face of the insert 2, also shown in Fig. 2). Consistent with this interpretation, the "fold line" of the insert is defined by the free upper edge of the first part forming the support element for the product. Therefore, in EP '080, the support element of each insert is common with the "fold line" of the insert, according to the Examiner's interpretation.

In contrast, as seen in amended Claim 1, the free upper edge of the first part of the insert is distinct from the fold line of the metal plate. Therefore EP '080 fails to disclose each and every element of Claim 1.

USPN '903 likewise does not disclose such a support having a fold line of the metal plate distinct from the free upper edge of the support. Further, the slats of USPN '903 are formed by metal plates that are arranged exclusively parallel to the direction of the incidence of the laser beam. Therefore, because EP '080 in combination with USPN '903 fail to teach or suggest each and every element of Claim 1 of the present invention, they do not render Claim 1 obvious under 35 U.S.C. § 103. Accordingly, Applicant requests the allowance of Claim 1 and all claims depending therefrom.

III. Rejection of Claims 8 and 23-27 under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

Claim 8 has been amended to clarify that the laser-cutting machine table comprises a plurality of juxtaposed slats, each comprising a trough which contains a plurality of juxtaposed inserts arranged parallel or substantially parallel to one another. Support for this amendment can be found in the specification, paragraphs [0035] through [0041].

Although the Examiner interprets the support elements of EP '080 to be "slats," the support elements of EP '080 do not *each* comprise a trough containing a plurality of juxtaposed inserts. Additionally, the "support bars" of USPN '903, which the Examiner interprets to be equivalent to the "slats" of the present invention, do not *each* comprise a trough containing a plurality of juxtaposed inserts. Because the cited references do not teach or suggest each and every element of Claim 8, they do not render it obvious. Accordingly, Applicant requests the allowance of Claim 8 and all claims depending therefrom.

A favorable action and an early issuance of the case are earnestly solicited. Applicant has included payment for a two-month extension of time. The Director is hereby authorized to change any additional fees or credit overpayment to deposit account 024300.

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Respectfully Submitted,

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